

# Uncle Sam Stands Alone in American Wheat Pit, Bidding \$2.20 for the Crop

The Question Is: Having Abolished Speculation and Fixed a Price at Which Farmers Are Reluctant to Sell, Will the Government Have to Seize the Crop From Their Bins?

By Theodore M. Knappen

CHICAGO, Sept. 12.—The great and important industry of betting on the price of wheat is no more.

The wheat pit has vanished. Feeble attempts are made in Minneapolis to replace wheat with oats. Chicago turns its attention mostly to corn and Duluth specializes in flax. But nothing can take the place of wheat as a vehicle of speculation. The speculators are disconsolate.

First, the exchanges themselves did away with the business in "futures" as a temporary measure, and then came the government and fixed a maximum price for wheat—a dead level price—with only one buyer. That is the government of the United States. So, now, the exchanges couldn't have a business in futures if they wanted one. There is no more wheat pit. There are no more quotations on wheat, either for future or cash delivery. Men who have made their living as commission brokers for the speculators have no more occupation, and many a pit representative is out of a job.

College Professor

Fixed the Price

Instead of a varying market price made by a shouting aggregation of quick-witted, nimble young men seemingly intent on establishing pandemonium, there is one fixed price, and that has been established by a college professor in council with men wise in wheat and transportation. Instead of all "trades" passing through the exchanges, with a multitude of sellers doing business with a multitude of buyers, all cash wheat is handled now with about as much ceremony as you would use in checking your coat.

Every car of wheat received at the great wheat terminals is promptly turned over to the government representative, and he in turn distributes the available supply pro rata among the purchasers, who must be millers, and who are in turn bound to charge no more for the wheat than it cost the government.

Moreover, he knows that next year the minimum price for his wheat is fixed by law at \$2, and he figures that that may be the maximum, too, now that the food administration has taken charge of the matter. With corn responding to the market demand and uncontrolled, he is likely to prefer to plant corn.

Allies Would Buy Wheat at Any Price

As to the charge that speculation as a means of stabilizing prices so completely broke down that the exchanges themselves had to abolish futures temporarily before the government stepped in, the brokers say the markets were confronted by such an extraordinary situation that it would be just as reasonable to expect the ordinary civil machinery of the state to be ready to carry on a great and unexpected war as for them to meet a condition of non-economical buying, such as prevailed when the Allies began to buy everything in sight at any price.

As they see it, the United States government was lending the Allies all the money they wanted to buy all the wheat there was in the United States, and more, too. Money was no object with the Allies. They wanted wheat—not cash settlements. Never before have the grain exchanges been confronted by buyers who could and would buy all the wheat, real or imaginary, at any price. It is not likely that after this war is over they ever will be again. Practically there was only one buyer of wheat, for the Allies worked together and no private buyer could expect to compete with them.

According to the grain men, the proper remedy would have been for the United States to have early limited the quantity of wheat the Allies could buy in this country. If that had been done "economical buying" would have followed and the situation would have been such that the legitimate speculator could have played his normal function of insurance to the cash buyer. But, that does not prove that lifeboats as a means of transport are permanently superior to liners.

"Heaven only knows what may come out of the topsy-turvy world the war has made, but I am firmly convinced that the experience of the government in fixing wheat prices will demonstrate that the meeting of supply and demand, of shrewd sellers and equally shrewd buyers in the grain exchanges is the best method of establishing prices in ordinary times. Why, already the very farmers who formerly wanted speculation abolished are now petitioning to have it restored. They were against speculation when they thought it resulted in a too low price; they are for it when they think it means a higher price.

"If, as is possible, the whole world should be blessed with good wheat crops next year, the government will have to pay a stupendous price for the heroic experiment it is now making. By law the farmers of the United States are guaranteed a basic price of \$2 a bushel until July 1, 1919. Uncle Sam may find himself with some hundreds of millions of bushels of wheat that cost him \$2 and that they may be worth only \$1 in the world's markets. He may stand to lose hundreds of millions of dollars. Will he then take his loss at once or will he try to establish an arbitrary minimum for another year or two in the hope that a short crop will let him work off his surplus?"

"Already the difficulties of proper-

time it is sold to the miller or exporter.

The wheat the miller grinds today must correspond to the quantity of flour that is sold today. He dare not accumulate stocks, for if he does he may lose heavily through a decline in price. With trading in futures forbidden during an emergency, price fixing seems to be the only way to stabilize the relation between producer and consumer, vexatious as it is likely to be.

In ordinary times when a mill buys wheat for cash it sells short an equal quantity of wheat for future delivery. If the market goes up it has a profit to its credit on the actual market. If the market goes down it has a speculative profit to offset the loss on the actual wheat.

This is the great economic function of the speculator. In striving to make a profit for himself by guessing the future value of wheat he provides insurance for the miller and the farmer. If the wheat buyer can "hedge" the mo-

ment he buys wheat from the farmer, there is no necessity for creating a wide margin between the current cash price at the terminals and the price paid to the producer, because the buyer, by turning to the speculator, has insured himself against loss from market variations.

Evils Due to Daring Gamblers from Outside

The evils of speculation result from the operations of the pure outsider individually petty, but mighty in the aggregate, who rushes in from time to time, just as he might occasionally share the dice for the cigars. He follows the crowd, a blind impulse or a mysterious "hunch." His acts are not based on mature judgment as to the relations of supply and demand. He carries a bull movement too far and shows a bear tendency too low.

There are persons in the grain trade who seriously talk of confining speculation in futures to certain licensed operators of experience and responsibility, persons whom they would designate as investors of operators in futures instead of speculators. In this way they would seek to eliminate that extreme of speculation which they call gambling.

"What would you have done," I asked James A. Patten, the millionaire operator of the Chicago Board of Trade, "had you been in supreme control of the situation when the wheat supply crisis began to develop?"

"The Lord only knows," was his answer. "We were confronted by a situation that never arose before. There were no parallels, no precedents. We did the best we could when we arbitrarily forced settlements and discontinued future trading. The government did the best it could or that anybody could when it fixed a price for wheat and took over the whole business.

When the Ship Sinks You Take to Lifeboats

"There was a condition that transcended all experience and that was beyond the scope of all economic agencies. Nothing but the arbitrary action of government could meet the extraordinary crisis. When the ship sinks you take to lifeboats, but that does not prove that lifeboats as a means of transport are permanently superior to liners.

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## War Factories Create a New Aristocracy

British Labor Basks in Sun of Munitions Prosperity

Women Share In High Wages

Employers Push Campaign for Savings—Drink Still a Problem

By Rev. Elmer T. Clark, Litt. D.

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LONDON, Sept. 10.—The laboring man has never been so prosperous in Europe as he is to-day—and the same applies also to the working woman. There is no problem of the unemployed, because there is no such scarcity of workers; it could not be otherwise when an army of many millions is in the field, having been drawn largely from the ranks of the laboring class. I suppose there are no industries that would not be glad to employ more men if they could be found; the hotels and stores are suffering very much and their service has been made abominable because of their depleted staffs.

It required over an hour for me to purchase a pair of shoes, the management explaining that the government had left them but two of their dozen salesmen. The decrease in the number of purchasers, it was declared, could not be compared with the decrease in the staff. Not only are the private business institutions wanting men—knowing, however, that their wants cannot be satisfied—but the government is clamoring for them also.

The great increase in the munitions works and allied industries which have been taken over by the government is responsible for this. Everywhere one can see great posters asking for men and women, offering to give them the required training and then put them to work. If a man is desired, and it was physically possible, he could be employed twenty-four hours in the day for seven days in each week.

Of course such competition and such urgency has caused a great increase in wages—and the increase has been superinduced also by strikes and the demands of the men. In Europe during war time, as in America in time of peace, the patriotic and altruistic spirit does not demote the attitude of the workers; they are out for the cash, and they do not hesitate to take every advantage of the severe situation in order to better their own condition. The flagrant selfishness of the workers is not demoted by the patriotic spirit. So wages have increased wonderfully, and more demands are still being made. It appears as if the workers were about to take their own in Europe, as they did immediately after the days of the Black Death.

"New Aristocracy" Is Working Class

So the working class is referred to as "the new aristocracy," and I heard a lady complain that the munition workers had bought up all the pianos, so that the better elements could not obtain one. This was a recent appearance in a journal, and it was copied by others under headings like "Modern Plutocracy." "Wanted, a high-grade piano and player by a lady munition worker with the ready money."

The commandant in charge of a munition plant told me that a certain company of workers designated, who were by no means the most highly paid, earned by piece work about \$5 (\$30) per week, and that most of the women workers were making twice as much as they had ever made before.

French Tolerant Of Foreign Tongues

Exotic Languages and Even German Still Spoken in Paris

Despite some disappointments Paris has remained the most hospitable city of the world. War has effected no change whatever in the unfeigned cordiality of its welcome, and it has not ceased to trust that all its foreign guests—every day increase in numbers—are or tend to become its friends and the allies of France. Unfortunately, the Parisians, stay-at-home people as they are, are polyglots. They do not know foreign languages, and they feel vexed when made to feel this inferiority.

Add to this that they are not a little vain of their beautiful French language, which, to warrant their pride, every body agrees is distinguished for its clear elegance, and you will easily understand their grief at seeing how in certain quarters (the Quartier Latin, for instance, to which the title of College of the Four Nations no longer suffices) the French is being submerged under a confusion of idioms recalling the Tower of Babel.

And here is an even more vexatious contention: It happens that in this deluge of exotic sounds and phrases a trained ear often discerns words with German consonants.

Evidently this means nothing. The Aisatian dialect resembles the German, which itself is a language spoken by a great number of Poles and Czechs, and it is also well known that there exists a German Switzerland where France is said to count precious and true sympathizers.

Would it be too much asked of our guests to use only exceptionally and in private foreign languages?

At the beginning they will, to be sure, maintain some difficult subjunctives or participles. We shall have the good taste not to smile at these slight sprains inflicted on the rules of Vaudeville, and shall feel grateful for their delicate intention to spare us the painful confusion of seeing them, so different at all the places lately occupied by our young men who have left for the field where wounds and laurels are gathered.

And thus, better understood, our European and American friends will become even more sympathetic to us. —Le Gaulois.

is now earned seems to be largely expended for better quarters, clothes, furnishings and food. Some of them have been enabled to move out of the old environment altogether, walks of life, while the condition of most of them in the matter of amusements and recreation has been improved. I had an interesting talk with a little girl whose parents had taken her out of the East End. She had returned to visit the mission, and was freely expressing her desire to be back among her friends. "I have not seen a light since I left," she said, "and the boys come down the street all by himself." In the old existence she had been accustomed to seeing policemen going about in pairs.

The Exodus of the better element among the workers constitutes a real problem for the churches and missions in the slums, for it is leaving them without their best members and volunteer workers. "It is a real problem," said a mission superintendent, "but of course we are glad to struggle along in our poverty if our people can be improved."

It is not always the case, however, that more wages brings more comforts to the home. Often it only affords more means for the enjoyment of one's self at the public house. If the man is not steady in his habits, if he frequents the "pubs" with a large degree of regularity, it is often the case that his increase only means more ale and dissipation; of course, in the end, it will mean the loss of his home and a deeper degradation.

I have spent several evenings in the public houses of the East End of London, the noted slum district of the city, and the results of my investigation are not encouraging. I have seen the docks, I have gone into the resorts of sailors, laborers and women of the streets. It has been a revelation to me. To see the harpists and the women sitting at tables in the public houses, standing at the bar drinking is distinctly interesting to an American; and these miserable resorts have been full of interest to one accustomed to a religious atmosphere. I have seen the women sitting at tables in the public houses, standing at the bar drinking is distinctly interesting to an American; and these miserable resorts have been full of interest to one accustomed to a religious atmosphere. I have seen the women sitting at tables in the public houses, standing at the bar drinking is distinctly interesting to an American; and these miserable resorts have been full of interest to one accustomed to a religious atmosphere.

Americans Could Aid Dry Cause in Britain

I could not give to Americans better advice than to urge them to exert all possible influence to cause England to prohibit liquor. It is a great and constant menace to the troops, and the American soldiers will be subjected to it. America should make it plain that she is averse to supplying foodstuffs to England while England uses her own resources for the production of intoxicants to reduce the efficiency of the troops and to undermine their morals and health.

As for the East End, to revert, it is not what it used to be. Police supervision has changed it, much to the disgust of many of the oldtimers, but to the distinct betterment of the people. The type of public house, the music hall, that flourished a few years ago has gone, and the resorts that now flourish are orderly in comparison with them, although they strike me as being exceedingly disorderly still. The two most notorious of them all are now missions, under the control of the Methodist Church. If you knew the East End of London several years ago, think of it! Both the Mahogany Bar and Paddy's Goose converted into missions! It is too much!

I visited both of these noted places, learned their history and observed the work now being done in the buildings. The Mahogany Bar was a famous music hall, and it remains to-day practically as it has always been so far as the outside is concerned. The mission hall is now the auditorium of the mission, seated with rough benches instead of the tables and chairs that once were used. The trapdoors have been removed, and the stage is immediately under the chairs at the tables, thus enabling a drunken sailor to be dumped into the cellar with little confusion. Once in the cellar it was easy to rob him, and to take his clothes, and then carry him into the street some blocks distant through underground passages. When he awoke in the morning, if he ever did awake, he knew nothing of the passage through which he was carried, and being far from the resort he could not so easily fasten suspicion upon the place.

Flourishing Mission Replaces Vile Saloon

The superintendent in charge of the mission told me that on more than one occasion recently he had found a drunken sailor in the street, and that he had been immediately under the chairs at the tables, thus enabling a drunken sailor to be dumped into the cellar with little confusion. Once in the cellar it was easy to rob him, and to take his clothes, and then carry him into the street some blocks distant through underground passages. When he awoke in the morning, if he ever did awake, he knew nothing of the passage through which he was carried, and being far from the resort he could not so easily fasten suspicion upon the place.

Here at the Mahogany Bar, which retains the same name, there is now a flourishing mission, church and Sunday school. The mission is a very successful one, and I was told that they were as loyal and devoted Christians down. About fifty meetings each week as could be found in the City of London. The mission is a very successful one, and I was told that they were as loyal and devoted Christians down. About fifty meetings each week as could be found in the City of London.

The other interesting branch of the Stenney Mission is the old Paddy's Goose, an immensely rambling place. There is an immense meal swan mouthed on the roof over the front door, and it is one day became the object of a heated discussion between a "house" named "The Goose" and a "house" named "The Goose." The "house" named "The Goose" was a goose, and his friend called it as insistent that the fowl was a swan. It came to pass that Paddy was forced to vindicate his position by force of arms, or rather by force of law, and he did this to the entire satisfaction of the party of the second part. After that no one dared deny that the figure was that of a goose, and the resort became known as Paddy's Goose, and it returns that name to this day.

This place had no traditions in the floor, but it had a drawbridge for the convenience of the patrons. This bridge, when lowered, spanned a court between the Goose and some adjoining buildings, so that when it was lowered those desiring its conveniences could escape, or the unfortunate sailors could be carried over it and deposited elsewhere.

But the mighty have fallen low: Paddy's Goose has become a Methodist mission. Here are carried on the usual round of benevolent activities that characterize the Mahogany Bar and the other branches of Stenney. The conversion of the Goose has recently been celebrated in song. George R. Sims, "Dagbladet," publishing the following testimonial:

I stand aside to muse and glance. Where Jack of old would drink and dance, I pause and hear sweet sounds within. The fowl has been transformed into a swan. And gentle voices softly raise. To God their songs of praise and praise. The fowl has been transformed into a swan. And gentle voices softly raise. To God their songs of praise and praise.

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is now earned seems to be largely expended for better quarters, clothes, furnishings and food. Some of them have been enabled to move out of the old environment altogether, walks of life, while the condition of most of them in the matter of amusements and recreation has been improved. I had an interesting talk with a little girl whose parents had taken her out of the East End. She had returned to visit the mission, and was freely expressing her desire to be back among her friends. "I have not seen a light since I left," she said, "and the boys come down the street all by himself." In the old existence she had been accustomed to seeing policemen going about in pairs.

## How Butte Lynched The I. W. W. Hero, Little

Encouraged by Failure of District Attorney to Arrest Agitator. Masked Citizens Spirited Him From City and Hung Him to Bridge

(Special Correspondent)

BUTTE, Mont., Sept. 11.—Two years ago Joe Hill, an I. W. W. agitator, of Utah, shot and killed in cold blood a citizen of Ogden. Hill had a fair trial and was convicted of murder in the first degree. Most extraordinary efforts were made to save his life. He was of Swedish birth, and the Swedish Minister at Washington interceded with President Wilson, who made an appeal of courtesy to the Governor of Utah to spare Hill's life. To add the weight of fear to the influence of the President's appeal and international pressure the Governor was threatened with assassination if Hill's life was not spared. But the Governor was inexorable, and on the appointed day Hill stood before a firing squad and met his death in the fashion in which Utah carries out the death penalty.

Immediately Hill became the martyr of the Industrial Workers of the World. The notorious I. W. W. song book, intended "to fan the flames of discontent," contains many poems by Hill, and one dedicated to him in which he is pictured as laying down his life for a great cause, one of the world's heroes. Every effort has been made to build up an I. W. W. tradition of martyrdom around the trial and execution of Hill.

Now enters Frank Little. He died at the hands of a party of lynchers in Butte on August 1 last. The material for canonization is better in the case of Little than it was with Hill. Making a saint of a man who committed cold blooded murder is a task of obvious difficulties. But Little was the murderer—not the victim. Taking advantage of this fact the I. W. W. leaders, whose purpose is the overthrow and defeat of law and who always portray it as a tool of the capitalist class in the age-long struggle with the proletariat (that is an impressive sound—William D. Haywood, international secretary and chief of the organization, even issued a manifesto to President Wilson in which he informed him that the general strike would be declared throughout extensive regions if justice was not done to Little's murderers.

Little Became Leader Of Revolt in Butte

The local I. W. W. leaders in Butte were quick to seize the opportunity to immortalize Little. He had become the chief spokesman of the miners' strike in Butte, and his wild and reckless oratory of revolt had endeared him in a short time to the rough men of the mining camp, who love strong words and strong blows.

Encouraged by the failure of the United States District Attorney to proceed against him, the I. W. W. leaders in Butte seized the opportunity to immortalize Little. He had become the chief spokesman of the miners' strike in Butte, and his wild and reckless oratory of revolt had endeared him in a short time to the rough men of the mining camp, who love strong words and strong blows.

On the morning of August 2 his lifeless body was found hanging to a bridge. A group of about a dozen men entered his bedroom at about 11 o'clock that night and had silently and swiftly hurried him away to his death. Pinned to the body was a note of warning to Little's associates and a series of letters to him from the I. W. W. leaders. The patriotic people of Butte were intensely stirred by the spectacle of Little talking riot and revolution. The climax was reached when Little delivered an incendiary speech before a public meeting at a public assembly and conducted meeting.

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I. W. W. Blames Mine Owners for Lynching

The surviving I. W. W. leaders, undeterred by Little's tragic and ominous taking-off, immediately sought drunken sailor of the world reeled along the highway from the drams shops to the dancing rooms, and from the dancing rooms to the back alleys and courts of Artichoke Hill, where they always robbed and sometimes murdered. Socialism is also exciting. This morning the I. W. W. was accused as being the cause of a violent and summary death.

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Upheaval in Ranks Of British Workers

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